DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 348 799 EC 301 419

TITLE State Plan for Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders.
INSTITUTION Texas Interagency Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders, Austin.
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 18p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Agency Cooperation; *Autism; *Delivery Systems; *Developmental Disabilities; Family Programs; Incidence; Individualized Education Programs; *Long Range Planning; *Needs Assessment; Outreach Programs; Program Development; Program Evaluation; Rehabilitation; *State Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Texas

ABSTRACT

This Texas state plan presents proposals for provision of services to people with autism. It is noted that less than 25 percent of the estimated 8,500 persons with autism in Texas are currently receiving services. Preliminary sections look at the nature of autism, the numbers of Texans with autism, the responsibilities of the Interagency Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders, and the mission, principles, and goals of the Council. Most of the document examines current and future activities of state agencies including the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (e.g., demonstration programs for persons with autism, in-home and family support programs, and interagency personnel training); the Texas Education Agency (e.g., Individual Educational Plan provisions, an autism grant, and non-educational community based services); the Texas Rehabilitation Commission (the Vocational Rehabilitation Commission and the Extended Rehabilitation Services Program); the Texas Department of Health; and the Texas Department of Human Services. Goals and priority recommendations of the Council are then listed. These are: (1) the expansion and improvement of services for persons with autism; (2) the development and monitoring of such programs; and (3) increased public and professional awareness of autism and pervasive developmental disorders. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

EC

ED348799

State Plan for Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Linda Kemp

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1991

Interagency Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders

EC 301419

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Interagency Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders
P.O. Box 12668 • Austin, Texas 78711-2668
(512) 323-3253

May 20, 1991

Ben Harold Moore, Jr., M.D.
Council Chairperson
San Antonio, Texas

Jan R. Newsom, Esq.
Dallas, Texas

Anita Anderson
Texas Department
of Human Services
Austin, Texas

Aline Weinheimer
Texas Education Agency
Austin, Texas

Kenneth Honeycutt
Texas Rehabilitation
Commission
Austin, Texas

Cindy Kenneally
Texas Department
of Health
Austin, Texas

James D. Brittnacher
Texas Department
of MHMR
Austin, Texas

The Honorable Ann Richards, Governor
The Honorable Bob Bullock, Lt. Governor
The Honorable Gibson D. Lewis, Speaker
Interested State Officials

On behalf of the Interagency Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders, we are pleased to transmit the State Plan for Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders. This plan presents the mission, goals and specific recommendations of the council.

As the plan indicates, there are an estimated 8,500 persons with autism in Texas. Available data suggests that less than 25% of Texans with autism are receiving services.

This plan is our blueprint for the future. We will need your continuing support to translate this plan into reality.

Sincerely,

Ben Harold Moore, Jr., M.D.

Ben Harold Moore, Jr., M.D.
Council Chairperson

BHM:JB/cw
Enclosure

CONTENTS

What is Autism?.....1

How Many Texans are Autistic?.....2

What is the Interagency Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders?.....3

Mission of the Council.....4

Principles.....4

Goals.....4

Current and Future Activities of State Agencies.....5

Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation.....7

Current Activities.....7

Demonstration Programs for Persons with Autism.....7

In-Home and Family Support Program.....7

Other Mental Health and Mental Retardation Programs.....7

Interagency Personnel Training.....7

Future Activities.....8

Texas Education Agency.....8

Current Activities.....8

Individual Educational Plan Provisions.....8

Autism Grant.....9

Non-Educational Community-Based Services.....9

Future Activities.....10

Texas Rehabilitation Commission.....10

Current Activities.....10

Vocational Rehabilitation Commission.....10

Extended Rehabilitation Services Program.....10

Texas Department of Health.....11

Texas Department of Human Services.....11

Goals and Priority Recommendations of the Council.....13

WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism is a severely incapacitating, lifelong developmental disability that usually appears during the first three years of life.

Some of the symptoms of autism are:

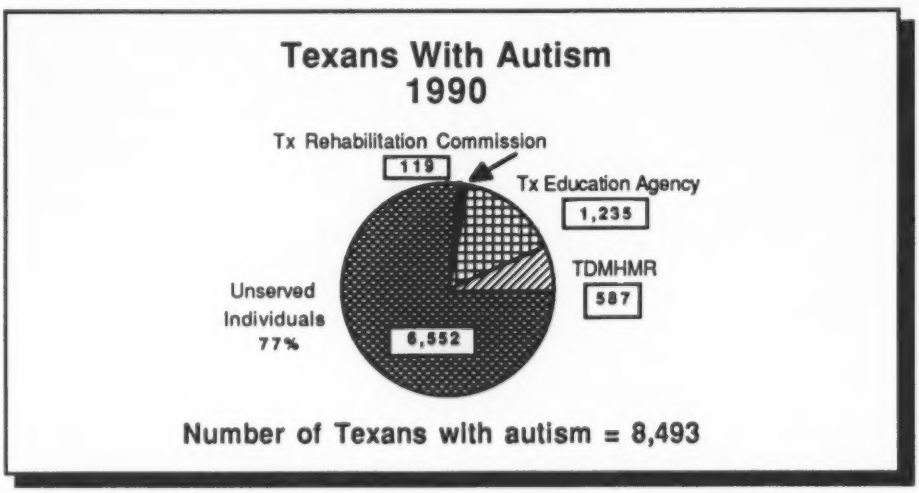
- Slow development or lack of physical, social and learning skills.
- Immature rhythms of speech, limited understanding of ideas and use of words without attaching the usual meaning to them.
- Inappropriate responses to sensations such as sight, hearing, touch, pain, balance, smell and taste.
- Inappropriate ways of relating to people, objects and events.

In its less severe form, autism resembles a learning disability. Usually, however, people with autism are more severely disabled. Severe autism can result in extreme forms of self-injurious, repetitive, highly unusual and aggressive behavior.

There appear to be several possible causes. Among these are untreated phenylketonuria, rubella, celiac disease, and chemical exposure in pregnancy. Biochemical imbalance and genetic predisposition have also emerged as possible causes.

HOW MANY TEXANS ARE AUTISTIC?

- The incidence of autism is estimated to be 4-5 per 10,000 births. Based on this rate, there are approximately 8,500 Texans with autism.
- Approximately 5,300 have IQ scores below 50; 1,600 have IQs between 50-70; and another 1,600 have IQs greater than 70.
- Autism is four times more common in males than females and occurs in families of all racial, ethnic and social backgrounds.
- Available data suggest that less than 25% of Texans with autism are receiving services.



WHAT IS THE INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON AUTISM AND PERVASIVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS?

The Interagency Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders (hereafter, the Council) was created by the 70th Texas Legislature in 1987. The Council consists of two representatives who have family members with autism or some other pervasive developmental disorder, both of whom are appointed by the Governor, and representatives from the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (TDMHMR), Texas Department of Health (TDH), Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS), Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC).

The responsibilities of the Council are to:

- Develop a state plan for persons with autism.
- Provide recommendations to state agencies related to autism programs, including recommendations related to the use of funds for persons with autism.
- Address issues related to services available to persons with autism.
- Advise the Legislature on legislation needed to provide better services to persons with autism.
- Identify and monitor gaps in the service delivery system.
- Develop strategies and guidelines for the development of new programs.

MISSION OF THE COUNCIL

The mission of the Council is to promote quality services that are responsive to the needs of persons with autism and pervasive developmental disorders.

PRINCIPLES

Uniqueness of Persons with Autism -- Persons with autism are individuals with unique needs and capacities who must be treated with both respect and dignity.

Responsiveness to Individual Needs/Preference -- Persons with autism must receive services which are responsive to their individual needs and preferences.

Availability of Choices -- Persons with autism must have an array of services available to them so that they have choices from which they can meet their individual needs and preferences.

Importance of the Family -- The role of the family in meeting the needs of persons with autism is vitally important. The service delivery system must help preserve the integrity of the family and support the family in its efforts.

Community Integration -- Persons with autism must have opportunities to live, work, learn and play in the larger community.

Commitment of Quality -- Persons with autism must receive services of high quality which reflect state-of-the-art treatment and technology.

GOALS

1. **To expand and improve services for persons with autism.**
2. **To plan, coordinate, develop and monitor programs for persons with autism.**
3. **To increase public and professional awareness of autism and pervasive developmental disorders.**

CURRENT AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF STATE AGENCIES

Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

Current Activities

- **Demonstration Programs for Persons with Autism**

  The Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation received $2.5 million in its FY 90-91 appropriation specifically designated for persons with autism. Most of these funds were used to support ten demonstration projects throughout the state. Annual funding for these programs ranged from approximately $19,000 to $207,000. Services at these sites ranged from part-time respite services to 24-hour, 365 days per year programs providing residential, education and/or vocational services. The number of persons served in these demonstration sites is approximately 100.

- **In-Home and Family Support Program**

  The In-Home and Family Support Program is designed to provide funds to individuals or their families for the purchase of supported living services and/or goods. The purchased items must be specifically linked to the individual's disability and support the recipient or their families in their own home.

  This program recognizes the family as the primary support for many persons with disabilities. It fosters independence and is intended to assist persons to be able to live in a place most like persons without disabilities. In FY 90, this program served 11 persons with autism (out of a total 3,254 served).

- **Other Mental Health and Mental Retardation Programs**

  Persons with autism are also served in other programs for persons with mental retardation or mental illness. Persons with a diagnosis of autism served by the TDMHMR system include:

State schools (on-campus)	218
State hospitals	43
State community programs	51
Community MHMR Centers	275
	587

- **Interagency Personnel Training**

  Personnel training in autism occurred for the first time in FY 1990. In cooperation with the Texas Education Agency and the Harris County Department of Education, staff members were provided stipends to attend a week-long training program. The goal was to improve local diagnosis and program expertise related to persons with autism.

Future Activities

Persons with autism are the responsibility of the mental retardation services delivery system even though autistic persons may have no diagnosis of mental illness or mental retardation. Transitional services from the public school system for this population are a priority. Where possible, persons with autism will be integrated into existing programs. Increased funding for specialized services to meet the unserved numbers of this population will be required. The 71st Legislature authorized the Texas Department of Human Services to expand the state Medicaid plan to include a comprehensive array of services for persons with developmental disabilities other than mental retardation, i.e., "related conditions." This includes autism. Medicaid will be the one source of funding for increased services for these persons.

Texas Education Agency

Current Activities

- **Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Provisions**

  A student who meets the federal criteria for autism or other pervasive developmental disorders is eligible to receive special education services. A multidisciplinary team which includes a licensed physician, psychiatrist or psychologist; a certified speech and hearing therapist, certified speech and language therapist, or a licensed speech language pathologist; and an educational diagnostician or other assessment specialist determines eligibility for this particular handicapping condition.

  After the evaluation, an admission, review and dismissal (ARD) committee meets. The ARD committee includes the parent; a representative from instruction, such as the teacher; a representative from the school district administration; a representative from the special education assessment team; and the student, when appropriate.

  The ARD committee develops the student's individual educational plan (IEP), which specifies annual goals, short-term objectives, amount of time to be spent in each setting, modification necessary for the student to be successful in the regular program, and criteria and schedule for evaluating his or her progress. For students with autism, the IEP must also include:

  1. extended educational programming;
  2. daily schedules reflecting minimal unstructured time;
  3. in-home training or viable alternatives;
  4. prioritized behavioral objectives;
  5. prevocational and vocational needs of students, ages 12 or older;
  6. parent training;
  7. suitable staff to student ratio; and
  8. a plan for transition into services after the age of 21.

Autism is the only handicapping condition to have such specific programming conditions.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) does not provide direct services to individuals with autism but regulates the types of services provided at the local level. Several

educational service centers offer technical assistance in programming and assessment. Region 19 ESC in El Paso offers comprehensive individual assessments. The Dallas Autism Program in the Dallas ISD offers a statewide conference every spring as well as summer training sessions for teachers.

In FY 1990, there were 1,235 students with autism in Texas.

- **Autism Grant**

  In the state plan for FY 91-93, there is $50,000 on an annually to provide inservice education to teachers, assessment personnel and paraprofessionals serving autistic students. More specifically, this funding will be used to provide:

  1. a statewide, week-long conference to address significant issues, such as assessment, instructional implications of assessment, parent involvement and training, behavior management techniques, least restrictive environment, and transitional planning;

  2. professional 1:1 statewide consultation with teachers of students with autism; and

  3. a lending library to make reading and audio-visual materials available to parents and teachers around the state.

  The Harris County Department of Education has provided these services since 1989. Various service delivery models have been used, ranging from large lecture college class settings to practicum situations and statewide attendance at the annual conference of the Autism Society of America to on-site consultation provided in the child's classroom. Training has been provided through school districts, education service centers, and institutions of higher education. Over 2,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, psychologists, speech therapists, recreation therapists, supervisors, parents and others have received training through this project. The primary foci of the training has been assessment, language development, behavior management, social skills training and community-based instruction.

- **Non-Educational Community-Based Services**

  TEA was appropriated $4 million for the 1989-1991 biennium ($2 million for each year) to provide non-educational community-based services. Local school districts would identify students receiving special education services who are at-risk for residential placement for educational purposes or who are returning from a residential placement. As of March 1991, approximately $500,000 remains. Individuals with autism have been able to access respite care, attendant care, case management, and transportation costs through these special funds.

Future Activities

The Texas Education Agency will continue to support the Autism Grant program in its state plan and administrative budget as well as the programming provisions of the IEP. The State Board of Education recommended that the Non-Educational Community-Based Services program continue to receive the appropriations specified in S.B. 1019 of the 70th legislature.

Texas Rehabilitation Commission

Current Activities

- **Vocational Rehabilitation Commission**

  There are no special budgeted categories to provide services for persons with autism; this is true for all disabilities served by TRC in the vocational rehabilitation program. Individuals are served on a first come first served basis, if they are eligible. The eligibility criterion is that: there must be a reasonable expectation that the rehabilitation services will result in employment.

  Services provided include: medical, psychological, and vocational evaluation; vocational guidance and counseling; interpreter services; medical treatment to lessen or remove the disability; assistive device; job training; half-way house services; job coaching, job placement and follow-up.

  The number of persons with autism served in the program during FY 90 was 79.

- **Extended Rehabilitation Services Program**

  The Extended Rehabilitation Services program (ERS) provides sheltered work, work enclave, work crew opportunities and residential services to people with disabilities too severe to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services. Twenty-eight programs across the state provide long-term services in structured work settings, like sheltered industries, to allow these persons to work in the least restrictive environment.

  Services provided by the ERS program, such as medical assistance, counseling, diagnostics and evaluation, transportation to and from work, and rehabilitation engineering, allow people with severe disabilities to achieve maximum independence.

  The number of persons with autism served in the ERS program during FY 90 was 20.

Texas Department of Health

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) does not provide any direct services to persons with autism. However, TDH does certify and survey intermediate care facilities for the mentally retarded (ICF-MR) which may serve persons who have a diagnosis of autism. Also, TDH grants a level of care to a person with autism if they are to be served at such a facility.

Texas Department of Human Services

The Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS) has no special charge related to persons with autism. The entire range of TDHS services which includes Health Care Services, Intermediate Care Facilities for persons with Mental Retardation and Related Conditions, Community Care Services and Protective Services for Children and Adults is available to persons with autism when appropriate.

GOALS AND PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL

Goal 1: To expand and improve services for persons with autism.

Recommendations:

1. **Education Services** -- To promote appropriate educational services for persons with autism and to develop awareness of educational resources available for local education agencies, parents and service providers.

2. **Vocational Services** -- To develop mechanisms to ensure that persons with autism have access to the entire range of vocational services including supported employment.

3. **Family Support Services** -- To provide in-home and family support to reinforce the efforts of families to meet and cope with the needs of persons with autism.

4. **Housing and Residential Services** -- To provide an array of housing options and residential services so that persons with autism have choices available to them.

5. **Respite/Attendant Care Services** -- To promote and expand respite/attendant care services for persons with autism.

6. **Transition Services** -- To develop mechanisms to ensure that there is continuity of services when responsibility for services to persons with autism is transferred from one state agency to another.

7. **Case Management** -- To encourage the expansion of case management services ensuring that case managers are sensitive to the needs of persons with autism and their families.

8. **Recreation Services** -- To facilitate the expansion and integration of recreational opportunities for persons with autism.

9. **Diagnostic Services** -- To develop expertise in the assessment staff of the various state agencies to diagnose autism and to promote a single evaluation process to be accepted by all agencies.

10. **Demonstration Projects** -- To promote efforts to establish model programs for persons with autism.

Goal 2: To plan, coordinate, develop and monitor programs for persons with autism.

Recommendations:

1. To develop a planning process for the Council which is coordinated with the planning processes of the various state agencies involved with the delivery of services to persons with autism.

2. To work closely with local advocacy groups and service providers in the planning process.

3. To identify needs of persons with autism, the services currently available for them and gaps in the existing service delivery system.

4. To increase the awareness of the needs of persons with autism within the various state agencies.

5. To identify persons with autism served by each state agency system.

6. To review state program standards and recommend revisions and procedures for coordination so that the accessibility and eligibility of persons with autism into such programs is enhanced.

Goal 3: To increase public and professional awareness of autism and pervasive developmental disorders.

Recommendations:

1. To continue and support TEA autism training programs.

2. To coordinate staff development activities for direct care staff related to autism across state agencies.

3. To train assessment staff of the various state agencies in the diagnosis of autism.

4. To work with local advocacy groups to identify resources available for persons with autism.

5. To require that the various state agencies coordinate activities to develop a directory of resources, brochures and other materials to promote an understanding of autism and the accessibility of services for persons with autism.